

UNCLAS MAPUTO 000834

SIPDIS

STATE FOR DS/IP/AF, DS/IP/ITA, DS/IP/FPO, AF/EX, AF/S

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [MZ](#)

SUBJECT: MANY CONTRACT GUARD FORCE MEMBERS GO ON STRIKE IN  
MAPUTO

1. SUMMARY. On July 5, 2005, individual employees of the local guard force contracted through Wackenhut held a strike. Roving bands of striking guards and laid-off workers numbering approximately 20-25 each were going to each post to persuade the guards, either by force or intimidation, to abandon their posts. Both the RSO and ARSO reacted by visiting each guard post to determine which posts were manned and to persuade the guards that were still present to remain at their posts. Many posts at USG facilities and approximately 25 percent of residential posts were abandoned. AmEmb Maputo has 110 guard posts including supervisory positions. By 0915 many of these roving bands of guards had congregated into a group numbering 200-300 outside the Wackenhut headquarters. USG employees and families were contacted via the cascade system and email to inform them of the situation. The RSO office is working with the local guard contractor to provide temporary guard coverage until the situation is resolved. As of COB July 5th, all residential posts are covered, and USG office facilities are covered but significantly understaffed. END SUMMARY.

2. On July 5, 2005, many members of the local guard force contracted through Wackenhut held a strike. The RSO had been informed that this strike would happen, however previous strikes never materialized or involved demonstrations by laid off workers in front of the Wackenhut headquarters. On the morning of July 5th, the RSO and ARSO started receiving calls that many of the residential guards were leaving their posts. Both the RSO and ARSO reacted by visiting each guard post to determine which posts were manned and to persuade the guards that were still present to remain at their posts.

3. RSO and ARSO encountered roving bands of striking guards and laid-off workers numbering approximately 20-25 each, who were going to each post to persuade the guards, either by force or intimidation, to abandon their posts. The guards were informed by the RSO and ARSO that the act of abandoning their posts would be sufficient for them to be removed from the contract with the American Embassy. The diplomatic police was notified and temporarily supplied additional police to PA, Peace Corps, and Embassy offices. The RSO contacted the CDA who activated the Embassy Cascade System to inform USG employees and family members of the situation. Many of the Embassy guards, half of the USAID guards, and all of the PA office guards left their posts. The RSO and ARSO arrived in time to persuade the Peace Corps office guards to remain at their posts while a growing number of striking guards congregated outside the gate. Eventually the striking guards were persuaded to depart. This event was repeated outside a residence during the course of the morning. Approximately 25 percent of the residential guards left their post or did not relieve the night shift, to include the guards at the EMR, who have been on post 24 hours. Due to the lack of guards at PA office, the RSO requested that public services at PA be restricted for the day until more guards could be supplied to provide adequate security for the public access library. By 0915 many of these roving bands of guards had congregated into a group numbering 200-300 outside the Wackenhut headquarters.

4. The RSO has been in constant contact with the local guard program manager for updates and possible resolutions to the lack of security at USG facilities and residences. The guard contractor proposed and initiated a temporary subcontract with another local guard company to supply relief guard forces. By 1600 hours all residential posts had guards, either the planned day shift, the night shift that had stayed on for an additional shift, or temporary subcontract guards. The PA building is partially staffed, and the Embassy is operating at 35 percent of scheduled coverage. The local guard program manager stated that he would supply as many relief guards as possible. Various sources indicate that the situation will be the same on the following day, which will significantly drain a dwindling guard force. According to the local guard program manager, the strike is an illegal action on the part of the guard force which is being instigated by a small band of laid-off guards who are disputing a pay issue dating back ten years. Although the contractor is working with the Mozambican Ministry of Labor (which has already stated that the guards actions are illegal and that their arguments do not have any merit) to solve this issue, it is clear that it will not be resolved in one day.

5. The RSO sent a security message to inform USG employees and family members of the situation and provide

recommendations to ensure their safety during the lack of guard services. More information will be passed as it becomes available.  
Dudley